Statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji

*93. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a Fact that the Archaeological Survey of India has delayed permission to install the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Durbar Ground at Fort Raigad in Maharashtra; and

(b) if so, the reasons for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) No Sir. The Central Government in June, 2008 itself has conveyed its approval to Government of Maharashtra (GoM) for the installation of a statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at the Meghdambri (a modern canopy/chhatri Installed by the GoM in 1984 with ASI approved design over the stone platform reputed to be the site of coronation of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj) and a canopy over the existing statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj installed by the GoM in 1974 at Holichamal, in the Fort during Tri-Centenary of the coronation. The said approval called upon the GoM to furnish to the ASI the exact details of the design/plan, including dimensions and materials to be used for the proposed statue and canopy. The details are still awaited. It is understood that the GoM has constituted an Expert Committee which is working on it.

A meeting took place on 1.7.2009 between the senior officers of ASI and GoM in ASI Head Office on the issue in which, *inter-alia*, the following was agreed:

(i) Design of the proposed statue should be based on authentic sources. For this, the Expert Committee of GoM may access various libraries, archives including those of ASI as well as miniature paintings available in various museums.

(ii) Sanctity of the heritage ambience of the Raigad Fort must be upheld. The statue and canopy should not be imposing.

(iii) The interventions to made should be in conformity with the Venice Charter (1964) of UNESCO regarding the norms of Conservation & Restoration of Monuments.

(iv) Bronze should be considered for the manufacturing of both the statue and canopy having basic elements of architectural design with barest minimum decorative features.

(v) The GoM would finalize the designs for the statue and canopy in about 3 months and submit them to the ASI for approval with complete drawings, photographs and sketches. The ASI, after examining them, would convey its approval in about a month.

Sir, I would like to specifically mention that the Central Government is indeed very sensitive to the emotional reverence the people of India, especially in Maharashtra, have for Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. ASI would endeavor to approve the designs expeditiously no sooner they are received from the GoM.